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## Bric-à-Brac Gossip.

THE sale of the Vapereau collection of Chinese porcelain and other Oriental objects, the first of the kind this season at Paris, was tolerably successful. The total produced was \$10,000. The few fine objects fetched good prices. A large hemispheric bowl bought for the Limoges Museum brought \$200; a quadrangular vase \$304; a cylindro-ovoid vase \$300; two sacrificial bowls \$205; a large plate \$300; two silk Persian carpets \$302 and \$330 respectively, and another Persian carpet \$280. These were the highest prices paid. Among the curiosities of the sale was an inlaid arquebuse of very delicate workmanship. M. Vapereau, the owner of the collection, is the son of the author of the famous *Dictionnaire des Contemporains*. He formed his collection almost entirely in China. On his way home, passing through New York, he sold two of his finest pieces—two large black vases, what the French call à fond noir—to an American amateur for a very large sum, some \$6000 the pair, and at the same time he bought in New York two modern black vases of a small dealer who had himself paid some \$1300 for them. These vases were exhibited last year in the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, when the connoisseurs at once saw that they were common modern ware and of no special value.

It is curious that M. Vapereau, having, as he had, much experience and having around him many really fine objects, never saw the worthlessness of the two black vases that he paid so dearly for at New York. At the sale of his collection the two "marvellous" vases in question were knocked down at \$60! The collection of 168 boxes and flasks in pierre dure was sold by private treaty after the sale for \$2000.

AMONG the December sales at the Hôtel Drouot that of the Bécherel collection of objects of art deserves notice. The catalogue comprised 444 numbers, which brought a total of 174,859f. The pictures, 133 in number, were mediocre, and none, not even the Watteaus, Bouchers, or Fragonards fetched

bibelots into France, relates simply and with many interesting and curious details a journey in Japan in search of "bibelots" in 1874. The novelist, historian and collector, Edmond de Goncourt, introduces M. Sichel to the public in an amiable little preface, where he compares the author's too brief notes to the "Journal de Lazare Duvaux, le Marchand Bijoutier Ordinaire du Roy," so valuable for the history of bibelots in the eighteenth century.

AT the Thomassin sale of eighteenth century furniture, at Douai, total 150,000f., a gilt bronze vase with bouquet of flowers by Baptiste Monnoyer fetched 3750f.

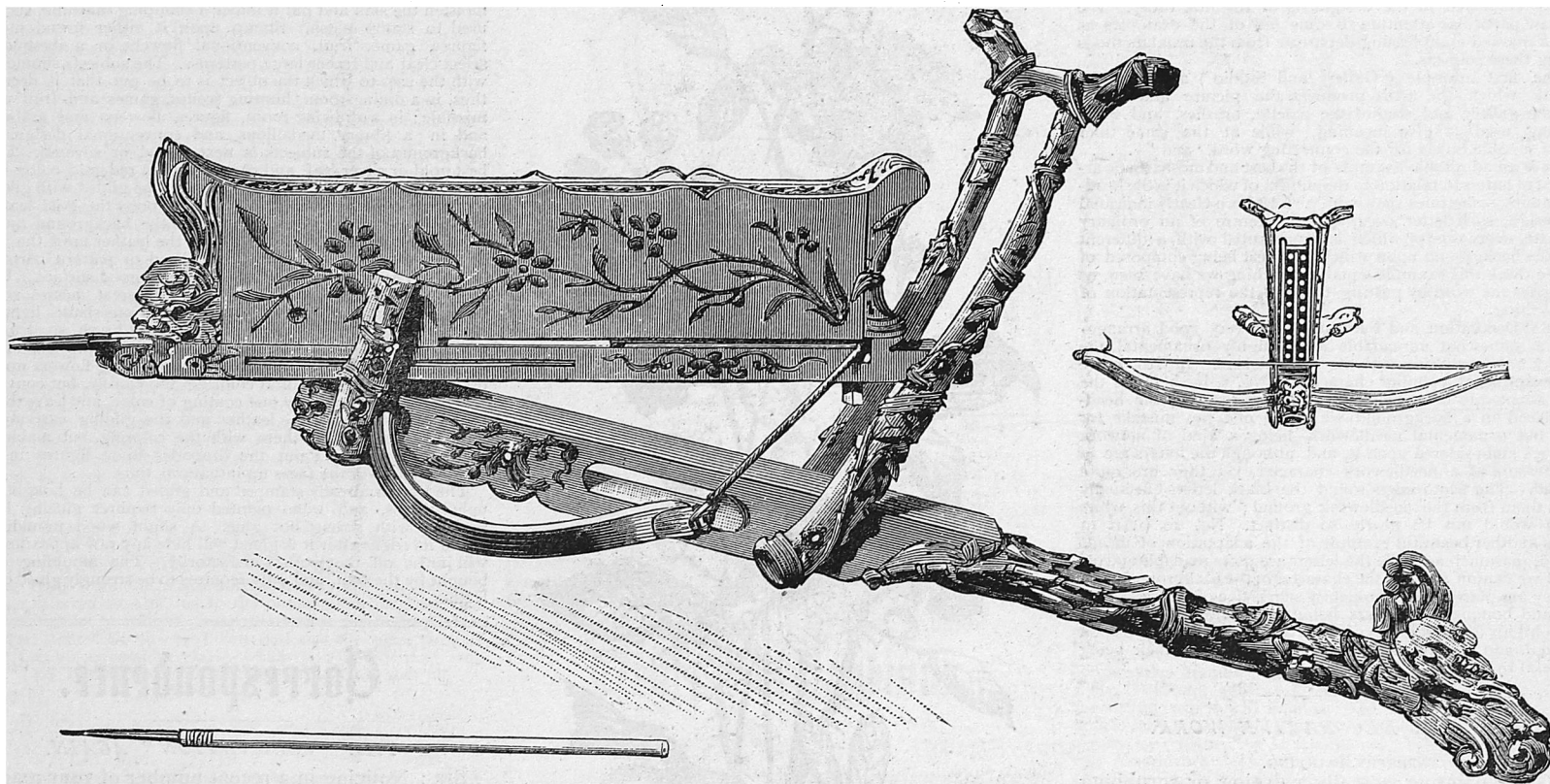
AN admirable exhibition of eighteenth century objects of art took place in the gallery of the Rue de Sèze at Paris, in December. The receipts being devoted to a charitable purpose, all the great Parisian collectors willingly lent their treasures. Sir Richard Wallace lent his Clodions, including a wonderful bust of the celebrated Sophie Arnould, the Baron Adolphe de Rothschild, Comte Ganay, Duc de Morny, Princesse Chimay, Comtesse de Courval, MM. Edouard André, de Vogué, Groult, Ephrussi, Lévy-Cremieux, Porgès, Dreyfus, the Faubourg Saint-Germain and the Hebrew financiers who have taken in modern French society the place that the fermiers généraux occupied in the society of the eighteenth century, lent the cream of their collections—paintings by Boucher, Watteau, Greuze, Nattier, Drouais, Pater, Lancret, Prudhon, Chardin and all the masters of the century of grace, elegance, and feminine seductions; miniatures, snuff-boxes, patch-boxes, fans, all masterpieces of the art of the painter, the goldsmith, and the ivory worker; marbles and terra-cottas by Clodion, Houdon and Pigalle and Falconet; bronzes, furniture, biscuit, all the beautiful objects and delicious colifichets that filled the palaces and boudoirs when Pompadour and Dubarry were queens and when Watteau was the arbiter of elegance. How can words describe an exhibition like this? What can one say about objects which we can only admire, as Victor Hugo says, like brutes? The spirit of the eighteenth century, the charm of its art, the seductions of the feminine sovereignty under which it developed, have been analyzed in masterly style in the books of the brothers Goncourt, of

which serve many purposes. A low wicker chair painted black and touched up with gold, has two superb cushions for the back and seat made of "crazy" patches of plush and satin. The fancy stitches, which are lavishly used to conceal and ornament the seams, disclose a great deal of gold thread and the effect is almost Oriental in its gorgeousness. Lounges, quilts and coverlets are made of stripes of such "crazy" mosaics-ornamented with gold, alternating with stripes of plain silk, each stripe being over a quarter of a yard wide.

In legitimate embroideries nothing exceeds for interest and beauty the new oblong tea-cloths for five o'clock tea. They are of momie cloth, with a hemstitch all around, and fringe at the end. In many the ground is entirely traversed by irregular lines done in dark silks. At the intersections one finds pansies, wild roses, and geraniums arranged exactly as in the richer materials. But in this case the flowers are outlined and the colors are darned in. Other tea cloths confine the decoration to the ends. This is a spray of cherries, plums, apples, or peaches, thrown carelessly across, the stems and leaves outlined and the fruit darned in.

For a newspaper rack (such as may be bought of any of the dealers in cane or willow-ware) a conventional honeysuckle may be very prettily worked either on Madagascar grass cloth, twilled linen and drill, or on more expensive materials, such as silk or satin. It should be but little shaded, so as not to stand too much out in relief from the ground. The leaves may be in crewel and the flowers in silk, or both worked in crewel, and only the high lights put in with silk. These racks are specially adapted for yachts, to keep loose papers and music tidy, and form a pretty decoration for the cabin.

Two altar cloths given to a village church are thus described in a London journal: One is of green cloth—retable, super-frontal, and frontal, all of green cloth; the retable is plain, edged with narrow silk lace, or braid, and green and gold fringe. The super-frontal is embroidered with five designs, alternately lilies and roses, treated in the mediæval style. The frontal has orphreys of broad green silver and gold lace. The centre is a light floriated Maltese cross, appliqué in gold silk, with a smaller cross radiating from it in red. The whole is light and chaste. A second cloth had the super-frontal of red velvet, ornamented with quatrefoils and lilies; the frontal was white, a diapered silk



CHINESE REPEATING CROSSBOW. IN THE VAPEREAU COLLECTION.

more than 2000f. The Diazes, Corots and Troyons were withdrawn before the sale, their authenticity having been contested. A beautiful "Satyr and Nymph of Clodion," rather free, for which M. Bécherel paid 9000f., was knocked down to M. Henri Rochefort for 4600f.; a large figure of St. Stephen, carved in wood, by French hands, end of fifteenth century, 2500f.; an 8vo vellum MS., fifteenth century, "Hours of the Virgin," with 41 miniatures, and each page surrounded with splendid polychrome border, 1880f.; a piece of old Saxe Apollo's chariot, polychrome decoration with horses in gilt bronze, 1550f.; a German square sixteenth century clock, engraved and gilt bronze, 1620f.; a curious eighteenth century clock, 2000f.; two candlesticks on triangular pedestals with silvered caryatides and mascarons, sixteenth century, 1780f.; a Louis XV. régulateur in rosewood, 1760f.; a Louis XV. upright secretary, rosewood, chequer marquetry, chiselled bronze ornaments and red marble top, 4100f. Five pieces of Flemish tapestry of great beauty and of dimensions such as to permit of their being used in a private dwelling, maritime and rustic scenes after Teniers, brought 39,000f. M. Bécherel had paid 45,000f. The sale was not a success. Many objects did not nearly reach the prices paid for them by M. Bécherel, and the effect of the sale on the market was bad, the more so as the Dutchmen—Salomon and Frenkel and the rest—were grumbling, too, at the comparative failure of their sales. On the whole, the Hôtel Drouot curiosity season cannot be said to have begun very brilliantly.

It is announced that the objects of art and curiosity of the late Alessandro Castellani will be sold by auction at Rome in March or April next. The collection in his house in the Rue Taitbout at Paris will be sold at the Hôtel Drouot in May.

THE famous Gunzburg collection of eighteenth century and other objects of art is to be sold in Paris toward the end of January. It will be, doubtless, one of the great sales of the season.

"NOTES d'un Bibeloteur au Japon," by M. Philippe Sichel, one of the first Europeans who directly imported Japanese

whose collection a considerable portion was exhibited; here I can only say that the exhibition was fascinating. You felt as if you were in the boudoir of Pompadour herself or in the gallery of some rich seigneur of the epoch. It is needless to say that the success of the exhibition was immense; it was the apotheosis of the century in which the Republic seeks the inspiration of what grace and elegance it has.

AT the Hôtel Drouot thirty-two drawings, pen-and-ink and charcoal, by M. Alphonse de Neuville, were recently sold for the total of 20,170f. They chiefly represented scenes of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, and were made for the illustration of a volume entitled "A Coup de Fusil," which was published by Charpentier in 1875. The original drawings were bought from Charpentier by M. Alexandre Dumas the younger, for the sum of 6000f., so that the illustrious academicien evidently did a good stroke by his sale, gaining, when all expenses were paid, more than 200 per cent on his capital. The highest prices paid for individual drawings were 1200, 1100, and 1010f. PARIS, Jan. 2, 1884. EDWARD VILLIERS.

## Needlework Notes.

THE hop vine is one of the prettiest of the older embroidery decorations. A large chair in shaded light-red plush has for the back a spray of hop bells and foliage done in green silks, in which the imitation of nature is most skilful.

A new form for mantel lambrequins, on which much of this decoration appears, is a straight band of satin or plush finished with an ornamental fringe. Above this is draped another piece of plush of a harmonizing color. This crosses the mantel, being not over six inches deep at its longest point, and of course not concealing the embroidery of the lower straight piece. At the outer ends of the mantel it is caught up with cords and tassels, falling with the ends of the plush which are at least three quarters of a yard deep, and are edged with fringe.

Nothing more attractive appears than the "crazy" patches

ground, the centre a Maltese cross of lilies, worked in white and gold, the inner part shaded into blue, with gold centre; this had a background of red velvet. The orphreys were red velvet, with a branch of the lily worked in beautiful shades, and of exquisite workmanship.

MACRAMÉ lace work has been described in early issues of this magazine. In answer to several recent inquiries, however, we may say that in this work—which by the way is one of the oldest kinds of lace work—"the thread is flax, and soft and agreeable in handling. The lace is made by knotting the threads together. One thread is held firmly over the other as leader, and each single thread is knotted twice on to it, when a leaf is worked from left to right the leader is held in the left hand. For making large pieces of lace the employment of a 'lace desk' is advised. Macramé lace is durable. Costumes of linen, sateen, batiste and lawn are richly adorned with it, and the manner of making it gives much room for originality in the method and design of knotting the threads and arranging the figures in the lace. In working this lace the flax threads are cut in certain lengths, all depending upon the width of the pattern to be wrought. One thread serves as a guide, and is called the 'leader;' it is held either in the right or left hand, but always by itself; its situation is determined by the design to be executed, which is soon learned, as the process is not difficult. There are only single, double, and open chains, with the Solomon's knot, to learn in Macramé lace work; to make the single chain, take two threads, hold one straight in the left hand, knot the other on to it with the right hand; hold the thread straight in the right hand, and knot the other end on to it with left; and repeat."

A NOVELTY for a "five-o'clock tea" cloth is thus described: "Russian cross-stitch in washing silks on fancy grounded Madras muslin with tinted lace, sewn on rather full. The cross-stitch is usually done on coarse canvas, which is drawn away afterward. This canvas being first tacked on, supports the somewhat delicate background, and gives substance for working on. The work must not be puckered, and, when finished, should be very lightly damped at the back, and ironed with a tolerably hot iron,